

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OES-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2008

INFO CNO

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

S E C R E T WELLINGTON 3506

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MNUC, NZ

SUBJ: USS LONG BEACH VISIT TO AUCKLAND

REF: CINCPAC DTG 160610Z SEP 76 (NOTAL)

1. I AM VERY MUCH DISTURBED BY THE RECOMMENDATION (REFTEL) THAT THE LONG BEACH VISIT TO AUCKLAND BE RECONSIDERED BECAUSE THE DESIGNATED ANCHORAGE IS TOO FAR OUT FOR THE SHIP TO BE PROPERLY SEEN AND BECAUSE THE TIME REQUIRED TO MOVE THE CREW/BIPS ASHORE AND BACK WOULD BE INCONVENIENT. REFTEL ALSO LISTS BOATING SAFETY AS A REASON FOR ITS RECOMMENDATION. WHILE I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD OVERLOOK THIS OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS, HOPEFULLY THE NAVY WILL NOT FIND THEM INSURMOUNTABLE. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT VIEW OF THE LONG BEACH FROM AUCKLAND'S HEAVILY POPULATED NORTH SHORE WILL BE EXCELLENT WITH ALMOST AS MANY PEOPLE LIKELY TO GET A GOOD VIEW OF THE SHIP AS IF SHE WERE TIED UP AT A DOWNTOWN PIER. CERTAINLY IT WILL NOT BE SEEN AT

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ALL IF IT DOESN'T MAKE THE TRIP. AS FAR AS BOATING SAFETY

IS CONCERNED, THE DESIGNATED ANCHORAGE IS ONE REGULARLY USED BY SHIPS AND THERE IS CONSIDERABLE PROTECTION FROM THE FORCE OF THE SEA IN ISLAND-STUDDED HAURAKI GULF. BUT ASIDE FROM OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS, THE VISIT OF THE USS LONG BEACH TO AUCKLAND AT THIS TIME ASSUMES HIGH POLITICAL IMPORTANCE.

2. AFTER YEARS OF TRYING TO REINSTITUTE PERIODIC VISITS OF AMERICAN NPWS TO NEW ZEALAND, WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL UNDER A NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT ANXIOUS TO RE-VITALIZE THE ANZUS ALLIANCE AND STRENGTHEN TIES BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES. THE USS TRUXTON VISITED WELLINGTON HARBOR FOR SIX DAYS DURING WHICH THE WATERSIDE UNIONS CLOSED THE HARBOR AND STOPPED REGULAR FERRY TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE NORTH ISLAND AND SOUTH ISLAND. DURING THAT PERIOD PRIME MINISTER MULDOON WAS UNDER GREAT PRESSURE FROM THE OPPOSITION LABOUR PARTY AND FROM THE TRADE UNION LEADERS WHO OPPOSE NPW VISITS ON IDEOLOGICAL GROUNDS. MULDOON AND THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT WAIVER AND THE TRUXTON VISIT WENT OFF WITH GREAT SUCCESS DESPITE THE WATERSIDER'S STRIKE. MULDOON NOW WANTS A QUICK FOLLOW-UP VISIT BY AN AMERICAN NPW WITH A VIEW OF DEMONSTRATING TO THE LOCAL EXTREMISTS THAT THEY CANNOT DICTATE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND TO ESTABLISHING FIRMLY IN THE PUBLIC VIEW THAT NPW VISITS ARE SAFE, NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY, AND TO BE EXPECTED FROM TIME-TO-TIME.

3. WE HAVE GONE ALONG WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S REQUEST FOR A QUICK FOLLOW-UP VISIT, AGREEING FULLY WITH HIM THAT THIS WILL SERVE OUR OWN INTERESTS AND THOSE OF AMERICAN/NEW ZEALAND DEFENSE COOPERATION. AFTER OFFICIALLY REQUESTING AND RECEIVING PERMISSION FOR VISIT OF LONG BEACH, IT WOULD BE UNTHINKABLE TO ME AT THIS LATE DATE TO ABORT IT. I AM CONFIDENT PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S REACTION TO SUCH AN ABORTION WOULD NOT BE FAVORABLE AS HE FEELS STRONGLY THAT FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO TRUXTON SHOULD NOT BE DELAYED.

4. DEPARTMENT REQUESTED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH CNO AND PROVIDE ME WITH URGENT RESPONSE THAT LONG BEACH VISIT IS TO GO FORWARD AS CONTEMPLATED.

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